

Haram is terrorizing people, people are fleeing for their lives. Boko Haram needs to be addressed because they have just kidnapped the Vice Prime Minister's wife in Cameroon. And, as well, we need to bring about some solution to the devastation of Ebola in Liberia, brought to my attention.

Mr. Speaker, there are many issues. We should not go home. We should address them and not point the blame. We need to get to work and do what is right by the people of the world and the American people.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

TRANSPARENT AIRFARES ACT OF 2014

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4156) to amend title 49, United States Code, to allow advertisements and solicitations for passenger air transportation to state the base airfare of the transportation, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4156

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Transparent Airfares Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. ADVERTISEMENTS AND SOLICITATIONS FOR PASSENGER AIR TRANSPORTATION.

(a) FULL FARE ADVERTISING.—Section 41712 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) FULL FARE ADVERTISING.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—It shall not be an unfair or deceptive practice under subsection (a) for a covered entity to state in an advertisement or solicitation for passenger air transportation the base airfare for the air transportation if the covered entity clearly and separately discloses—

“(A) the government-imposed taxes and fees associated with the air transportation; and

“(B) the total cost of the air transportation.

“(2) FORM OF DISCLOSURE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the information described in paragraphs (1)(A) and (1)(B) shall be disclosed in the advertisement or solicitation in a manner that clearly presents the information to the consumer.

“(B) INTERNET ADVERTISEMENTS AND SOLICITATIONS.—For purposes of paragraph (1), with respect to an advertisement or solicitation for passenger air transportation that appears on an Internet Web site, the information described in paragraphs (1)(A) and (1)(B) may

be disclosed through a link or pop-up, as such terms may be defined by the Secretary, that displays the information in a manner that is easily accessible and viewable by the consumer.

“(3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection, the following definitions apply:

“(A) BASE AIRFARE.—The term ‘base airfare’ means the cost of passenger air transportation, excluding government-imposed taxes and fees.

“(B) COVERED ENTITY.—The term ‘covered entity’ means an air carrier, including an indirect air carrier, foreign carrier, ticket agent, or other person offering to sell tickets for passenger air transportation or a tour or tour component that must be purchased with air transportation.”.

(b) LIMITATION ON STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in the amendment made by subsection (a) may be construed to affect any obligation of a person that sells air transportation to disclose the total cost of the air transportation, including government-imposed taxes and fees, prior to purchase of the air transportation.

(c) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall issue final regulations to carry out the amendment made by subsection (a).

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This Act, and the amendments made by this Act, shall take effect on the earlier of—

(1) the effective date of regulations issued under subsection (c); and

(2) the date that is 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFazio) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials for the RECORD on H.R. 4156.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 4156. Let me begin by thanking my colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle for their helpful support on this bill: Congressmen DEFazio, RAHALL, and RICK LARSEN of Washington. And on the Republican side, I would like to thank Congressmen FRANK LOBIONDO and TOM GRAVES of Georgia for their help and bipartisanship in crafting this bill.

A special thanks to Congressman TOM GRAVES who, in the 112th Congress, introduced similar legislation. He reached out to us early in the process and has been a true leader, helping us craft and move this legislation forward to provide absolute transparency to the flying public through H.R. 4156.

Before I explain the bill, I will enter into the RECORD letters of support for H.R. 4156, which represent a broad spectrum of support from business and labor.

44A, AFA, IAMAW, APA,
CAPA, SWAPA,

April 1, 2014.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: We write to urge your support for the Transparent Airfares Act of 2014 (H.R. 4156). This bipartisan legislation will enhance airfare transparency for airline customers by ensuring that they know exactly how much of their ticket price is attributable to federal taxes and fees while still knowing the full price of air travel before they purchase a ticket.

In January 2012, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) fundamentally changed U.S. airline industry advertising practices by implementing a Full Fare Advertising (FFA) rule, which reduced airfare transparency by requiring airlines to include government-imposed taxes and fees in the base price of an advertised fare. DOT's previous advertising rules had been in effect for 25 years—through Democratic and Republican administrations. Under the previous rules, airlines and travel agents were allowed listed government-imposed taxes and fees separately from the base price of a ticket in advertisements—as all other U.S. consumer products, with the exception of gasoline, are sold.

Our industry is critical to the U.S. economy. The U.S. commercial aviation sector drives more than \$1 trillion in annual economic activity—approximately 5 percent of U.S. Gross Domestic Product—and 10 million U.S. jobs. The industry's long-term viability and global competitiveness is threatened by a rising federal aviation tax burden that has increased 30-fold over the last three decades. On a typical \$300 one-stop domestic round-trip ticket, airline customers pay \$62 in federal taxes and fees, or 21 percent of the ticket price. The federal tax bite will increase to \$63 in July when the Transportation Security Administration passenger security fee will more than double from \$2.50 per flight segment to \$5.60 per one-way trip. Consequently, air travel is currently taxed at a higher federal rate than alcohol and tobacco, which are subject to so-called “sin taxes” intended to discourage their use.

Requiring airlines to include rising taxes and fees in advertisements and offers from airline and travel agent websites can dampen demand for travel and ultimately cost even more jobs in an industry that has lost nearly one-third of its work force since 2001, typically resulting in reduced service to small and rural communities. Since air travel is often an optional choice for individual consumers and businesses, even the smallest increase—or perceived increase—in airline tickets costs has a negative impact on travel decisions. In fact, in 2012, the U.S. Government Accountability Office found that a one percent increase in the cost of an airline ticket, including taxes and fees, would result in a one percent reduction in the quantity of tickets sold.

Your support of H.R. 4156 will help enhance airfare transparency for consumers, protect U.S. airline jobs and preserve air service to small and rural communities. We appreciate your consideration of this important legislation and hope that Congress will pass the bill on a strong, bipartisan basis as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

AIRLINES FOR AMERICA,
ASSOCIATION OF FLIGHT
ATTENDANTS—CWA,
INTERNATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF
MACHINISTS & AEROSPACE
WORKERS,
ALLIED PILOTS
ASSOCIATION,
COALITION OF AIRLINE
PILOTS ASSOCIATION,